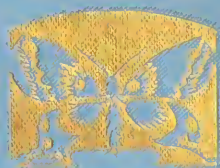


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A DAY
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in
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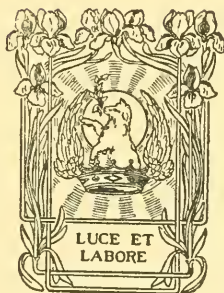
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A DAY DREAM IN JAPAN

BY PERCY BURTON
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no 1.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

Persillo [Poet and Painter]
Evarou [His wife]
Papillon [From Dreamland]
Li Chi [From Dreamland]
 [elderly admirer of Papillon]

Scene I. Persillo's studio.

Scene II. Papillon's garden in Dreamland.

Scene III. Same as Act I.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This youthful and unpretentious little poem-play was written nearly seventeen years ago in the course of a two or three weeks' trip across the Atlantic. I was coming to America for the first time on a tramp steamer sailing under ballast; though officially signed aboard as "purser," I was privately regarded as the "Captain's guest," with all the privileges such a distinguished appointment carries. During the intervening years my little manuscript has remained on the shelf at home in England, where, indeed, it has been mislaid for over a decade, and perhaps I have done wrong to disturb its child-like slumber. It appears as it was written — "when we were twenty-one" — unchanged except for an occasional word to improve its impulsive metre. Suffice it to say that I have no illusions as to any ambitions I may have possessed regarding it, and am well-content if it affords pleasure to a few friends.

My managerial activities in the theatre for almost a score of years successively with the late Wilson Barrett, Sir Henry Irving, Sir Charles Wyndham and Sir John Hare, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson and more recently with Sir Herbert Tree, have left me little personal leisure to devote to my pen. But before the sun sets and the last "star" has been swallowed up by the insatiable maw of the "movies" — yet ere the last legitimate theatre has been turned into a Picture Palace, a Museum or a Turkish Bath, — I look forward in retiring to a garden in England, — "somewhere in France," or to a certain beauty-spot in Sicily, to write another play for a perfectly neutral public.

P. B.

A DAY DREAM IN JAPAN
SCENE I

A Day Dream in Japan

SCENE I

PERSILLO'S STUDIO — MORNING

An attractive and artistically arranged studio — rich, but subdued in tone. There are doorways to the right and left with appropriate hangings. A wide opening at the back, through

A Day Dream in Japan

which the sun, shining brightly, tints the paintings, screens and other paraphernalia scattered about the room. There is a verandah, about which twine flowering vines. Beyond are pleasant gardens in the greenery of early summer. In the distance looms the shadow of a gloomy, snow-capped volcanic mountain from which intermittently a feather of smoke rises, giving a threatening air of disturbance to an otherwise quiet and domestic, but above all, artistic atmosphere.

[Evarou enters with flowers, which she arranges around the easel L. C.]

PERSILLO

[R. C. — Pensive and melancholy]

[Scene 1]

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A Day Dream in Japan

Alas! to think that Love is but a dream,
A little ripple on the sea of life;
And that which makes of earth a paradise —
The love of life, of wife, of art, of all,
Should soon become a half-hid memory,
Leaving an aching void, an empty soul,
Existence's vague echo of the life
Which love can consummate, and e'en annul.

EVAROU

Why are you sad, Persillo? Look at me
As you were wont to do with smiling face,
Tell me what ails you?

PERSILLO

Dearest Evarou,
Nought ails me, though I ail in ev'rything.
I know no reason, for monotony,
Save love has fled and left me desolate. —
The sun seems like a misty mass of light:

A Day Dream in Japan

The flowers no longer breathe their sweet
perfume,
The garden is a picture painted ill:
The songs of birds have lost their harmony. —
At night, the moon no longer reigns supreme,
The stars lie buried in a grave of clouds,
The breeze, that wafted gentle memories
As I lay thinking, is now lulled to sleep,
And love lies lost.

E V A R O U

Yet still your painting lives!
Your art may ease; come, take your brush
and paint
While I weave garlands near your woodland
dell.

*[She sits at his feet, toying with
flowers, while Persillo paints.]*

[Scene 1]

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A Day Dream in Japan

PERSILLO

My thoughts still wander howso'er I try;
My hand is bound, but mind roams every-
where. —

I prythee sing: a song of other days
May poison prove to this indifference.

EVAROU

What song? A bright, or mournful melody?

PERSILLO

Happy and sad, for when we gladdest are
Our sadness has a sweetness of its own;
And when we're sad yet happy can we be,—
A hallow'd happiness that shrouds the soul.
The thought of death when linked with life
and love

No longer fear inspires, but rest and peace.

A Day Dream in Japan

EVAROU

Why, then I'll sing the song you wrote your-
self

When first we met and loved as we do now, —
Your little story of the Butterfly. —

[Sings.]

*A Butterfly flew to a lily-flower,
Her weary wings to rest;
She had flown afar for many an hour,
And heaved her panting breast.*

*She thought — as Butterflies think — of the time
When she took her first mad flight,
And restlessly seeking new friends and clime,
She fluttered by from home sight.*

*She was loved and cherished; the sun had shone
O'er her pleasant pastime's hour,
But the clouds had come, and her lover gone
Like a fading passion-flower.*

[Scene 1]

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A Day Dream in Japan

*She heard the lullaby sung by the breeze,
And felt the lily's heart throb;
Longingly looked at the brook 'neath the trees,
Where she sank with one soft sob.*

*She had lived in love, but she died alone;
No tear from a friendly eye.
On the brink of the brook like dewdrops shone
When Butterfly floated by.*

P E R S I L L O

Alas! your charming music fails to find
E'en a responsive murmur of delight;
And only sad oblivion remains, —
To hide in sleep or her twin-sister death,
And in that stream Lethēan I would find
Forgetfulness of art and life and love.

E V A R O U

Poor Persillo! Are you then tired of me?

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

Not tired, my love, — although I love you not
As I was wont. My heart is heavy, and
I fain would drown myself in dreams or death,
Rather than live in shades of misery.
This potion, which I brought from Tokio,
I'll take e'en though it cost my life; 'tis said
Not only is't a drug of dreams, but death
If taken in too great a quantity.

E V A R O U

No, no! Persillo, take it not I pray.
Dreams but deceive, and death may follow
straight.

*[She tries to seize the phial, but
Persillo drinks, then gives it to
her, and lies down.]*

[Scene 1]

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A Day Dream in Japan

E V A R O U

A little's left, I too will drink, and go —
Where dreams or death bring me to Persillo.

*[Drinks, retires behind a screen and
falls asleep.]*

BALLET.

[Enter Papillon and Li Chi.]

L I C H I

This is the house where lives this Persillo,
But what freak brings you hither, Papillon?

P A P I L L O N

To make of him a friend, or more perchance;
Strange though it seems, Li Chi, when I have
you —

L I C H I

And ev'rything you want that I can give —

A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

Save beauty, poesy, and art, which make
Your gold seem dross, your ugliness a crime.

L I C H I

Pity me, Papillon, 'tis not my fault
That I no more have youth or —

P A P I L L O N

Well, I'll be
Respectful tow'rds your age if you'll contrive
To wear your years with less of jealousy.

[*Seeing Persillo.*]

But this must be Persillo. See, he lies
As if inspired with dreams —

L I C H I

Perchance with wine!

[*Scene 1*]

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A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

How sweet he looks! I'll wake him with a
kiss.

L I C H I

Cannot you be content to thus wake me?

P A P I L L O N

And waking you a nightmare give myself?
No. Kisses can't be bartered but in love,
And lest the sight of one should torture you,
You can withdraw and ponder on the bliss.

L I C H I

I think I'd rather stay.

P A P I L L O N

No doubt, but go!

[Exit Li Chi.]

A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

[*Kissing Persillo*]

Poor, pensive poet, why are you so sad?

P E R S I L L O

[*Waking*]

Vision of beauty!

P A P I L L O N

Well, how do you do?

P E R S I L L O

I was depressed and lonely until now,
But your sweet presence brings back life and
love.

Whence have you come and whither do you
go?

You've won my heart already. Pause awhile!

[*Scene 1*]

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A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

Till you have time to win it back again?

P E R S I L L O

Not mine, but your heart in exchange per-
chance.

P A P I L L O N

A wit as well as poet. (*Looking round*) Painter
too?

P E R S I L L O

More poverty than poetry, I fear.
My name is Persillo; yours —

P A P I L L O N

Papillon.

P E R S I L L O

Meaning a Butterfly! I wrote a song
Of one, which Evarou oft sings to me.

A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

The Butterfly I know — not Evarou.

P E R S I L L O

Well, will you sing about the Butterfly?

P A P I L L O N

Then will you tell me of this Evarou?
But no! The amours of a poet are
Too old a tale to tell, and one oft told.
Forget this Evarou yet talk of love.

P E R S I L L O

Silence in love is truest eloquence;
The soul is dumb in perfect happiness:
Words are like weeds which choke fond fancy's
 blossoms,
And wither, fading like fantastic dream.

[*Scene 1*]

A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

But ere you woke just now and found me here,
What did you feel or see that made you wake?

P E R S I L L O

I felt a dew-drop resting on my eye,
A sunbeam dancing in my inmost heart,
A dreamy peace that death could not affright,
A love that longed to look and love again;
I seemed to see a flow'r upon the path
With petals of a hue and shape sublime,
A fairy form all fair and fanciful,
To whom the breeze soft whisper'd tales of
 love:
I op'd my eyes, and saw you, Papillon.

P A P I L L O N

And did my kiss thus thrill you with delight?

P E R S I L L O

Your nearness was a kiss unto my soul,
And yet I knew not that you kissed me then,

A Day Dream in Japan

Although I know that you will kiss me now;
Nay, do not then refuse such simple suit:
I love you, Papillon —

P A P I L L O N

And I love you!

[They kiss.]

P E R S I L L O

How sweet a thing is life when linked with
love!

P A P I L L O N

How sad a thought that lovers part again!

P E R S I L L O

How long a look when one first falls in love.

P A P I L L O N

How short the dream that breaks before the
dawn!

[Scene I]

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A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

But is't a dream? Why not our destiny?

P A P I L L O N

Well, destiny is often but a dream.

P E R S I L L O

Shall ours be such, and shall we live in love,
Dreaming of life, of art, of destiny?

P A P I L L O N

I know a bow'r, where, shaded by the trees,
Flowers bloom, and birds are happy in the sun,
Singing to lilting tune of laughing breeze, —
A garden which like Eden is, and where
We might be happy *if* —

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

Mon Papillon!

Take me where'er you will, your heart's my
heaven.

[Exit Persillo and Papillon.]

L I C H I

[Entering.]

I hope I don't intrude.

[Looking round.]

It seems I don't.

They're fled already, leaving me alone;
But someone comes: I will conceal myself.

E V A R O U

[Waking.]

Persillo, did you call? *[Rising.]* I heard a
voice;

[Scene 1]

A Day Dream in Japan

Where can he be? — I left him here just now;
He was asleep, and cannot have gone far.

Persillo, answer! What is this I find?

A bunch of broken flowers, ribbon-bound,
To which still clings a wanton tress of hair. —
A faded flow'r from which fresh fancy blooms,
As weeds when nourished with the flower's
food,

Will grow together side by side until
The weed, the stronger, strangles its poor
mate. —

Thus Love lives happy till a passion-flower
Blooms by its side and feeds upon its strength,
Stealing its honey'd sweetness like a bee,
And withers then under bewitching spell.
So someone with enchanting influence
Has cast a spell around my Persillo,
And ruthlessly has robbed him of the love
Which once he felt for me. He said, alas,
He loved me not as he was wont to do, —
And now — Oh! Persillo, come back to me.

A Day Dream in Japan

LI CHI

Can this be wife to Papillon's new friend?
If so, she may help me and I aid her
To mend this broken chain of circumstance.

[*To Evarou.*]

Your pardon, madam, news of Persillo
I think you want, which —

EVAROU

— you can give to me?
My heart is broken; tell me 'tis not true
That he is faithless and left me — his wife.

LI CHI

Left you he has, but not, I think, for long,
And you may find and bring him back anon;
If in my company you care to go
I'll take you where you'll find your Persillo.

[*Exit.*]

[*End of Scene I.*]

A DAY DREAM IN JAPAN
SCENE II

A Day Dream in Japan

SCENE II

PAPILLON'S GARDEN IN DREAMLAND

A finished painting of Papillon lain carelessly against a tree, blooming with pink blossoms, is on one side of the scene, and a picturesque little summer-house abuts on the other corner, while

A Day Dream in Japan

flowers abound, and there is the sound of a gently rippling stream just in sight. Papillon is lying full length on the green grass, with arms akimbo, towards the front and in the centre of the scene, toying with some and petulantly destroying other of the flowers, which she plucks and throws aside, in an evident state of boredom and disillusionment. Persillo is painting under the trees at the back, immersed in his work and quite unconcerned with Papillon. He is evidently inspired by other thoughts and with another theme.

P A P I L L O N

You love your painting more than Papillon,

[Scene 2]

A Day Dream in Japan

The songs of birds than sound of my poor
voice;
The sunshine is more welcome than my
smiles:
A flow'r more fascinating — far more fair,
Than I have grown. A tree demands more
time,
Temper and talent than you give to me.
At night, the moon outshines my beauty;
now
Stars are the eyes whose fond, far gaze you
love;
The sky has more attractive face than mine,
Though, till my picture painted, you would
say,
Mine was the moon, star, sun-light of your
soul.

P E R S I L L O

Peevish Papillon! Would you have me e'er
Kissing and cooing — lying at your feet

A Day Dream in Japan

As some bough lopped from one-time fruitful
tree

For you to fondle till the blossoms fall,
And then throw from you as a child its toy?

P A P I L L O N

No! I'm the toy; too well you make me see
Your play-time's finished and you tire of me:
Only a play-thing you can lay aside,
And find a new one just as easily;
Once you were wont to do all I desired,
But now you paint and dream, and then you
mope,
When you have pleased yourself to heart's
content.

[Speaking to herself.]

But it was ever thus. Men love and lose
Their fancies just as we weak women do.
How many have I lov'd and lost before?

[Scene 2]

A Day Dream in Japan

Time runs too fast to think of each amour.
Life's leaves soon scatter in the autumn wind,
Although I'm only in my summer-time. —
I wonder what's become of poor Li Chi, —
He's near life's winter, though still ripe with
wealth.

P E R S I L L O

Poor Papillon! We're both to blame, I fear.
'Tis true my art I love, but you much more,
Although the time spent in your company
Seems to me wasted when I do aught else
But look at, or caress, or talk to you.

P A P I L L O N

I never spoke nor harbor'd such a thought
Though it may be just what you feel yourself,
And, lest your day-dream be disturbed by me,
I'll leave you to your own sweet company.

[Exit Persillo and Papillon.]

[Enter Evarou and Li Chi.]

A Day Dream in Japan

L I C H I

This is the garden. Here we'll wait awhile.
Travel is tedious; and you are tired.

E V A R O U

Not with the journey. Distance is a dream:
The waking to love's loss — reality.

L I C H I

Love still may be regained, if you with care
Arouse the interest of Papillon;
Be not too sudden or importunate,
But with discretion and diplomacy
Beseech her pity with a patient tongue.
She is a woman, and must needs be woo'd:
First gain her ear and then besiege her heart,
Which you may find and thus win Persillo.

E V A R O U

Perhaps Persillo might be found alone;
I could with more persuasion speak to him.

[*Scene 2*]

A Day Dream in Japan

L I C H I

His ire you might incur by coming here,
At all events Papillon's jealousy,
Whereas if with her aid you arm yourself
The battle is already half achieved. —
I hear a footstep, and will stand aside
Until an opportunity arrives,
When I will my entreaties add to yours.

[*Li Chi withdraws.*]

[*Enter Papillon.*]

P A P I L L O N

What can I do for you?

E V A R O U

Your pardon grant.
I am a stranger who has lost her — way,
And seeing this retreat just stepped aside
To rest my feet and ease my mind awhile.

A Day Dream in Japan

PAPILLON

You're welcome here. Is there aught else, I
pray,
To offer you in hospitality?

EVAROU

I thank you, no! Nothing save rest I need.

PAPILLON

Have you come far? — Your face looks wan
and worn,—
Or you may mourn the loss of someone dear?

EVAROU

Both a long journey have I made, and mourn
The loss of one who was most dear to me.

PAPILLON

Thro' death?

[*Scene 2*]

A Day Dream in Japan

E V A R O U

Alas! I know not, it may be, —
But some time since my husband went from
me,
Vanish'd as in a dream, without a word,
Leaving me — lone and desolate — to mourn
His death or faithlessness, I know not which.

P A P I L L O N

But was there nothing left, no sign to show?

E V A R O U

Only this ribbon bound with flow'rs.

P A P I L L O N

[*Aside.*]

'Tis mine!

[*Pause.*]

His name is —

A Day Dream in Japan

EVAROU

Persillo, — mine, Evarou.

PAPILLON

Did he love you before the other came
And robbed another's nest unwittingly?

EVAROU

Happy we were from morn till dewy eve
Among his paintings and his poetry;
For none he loved but me, and I loved him
More than my life or aught contained therein.

PAPILLON

My name is Papillon —

EVAROU

Then you are she,
Of whom I've heard! whose power I know too
well.

Why did you take from me my Persillo?

[Scene 2]

A Day Dream in Japan

He loved me only till you came and snared
His soul by some delusion or a dream,
From which he'll wake, and wish himself again
In his own homestead with his Evarou.

P A P I L L O N

True is it that your Persillo is here,
But he is mine and I have won his love,
Which when I gained I only knew your name—
Not that you were his wife.

E V A R O U

Now that you know
Will you not yield him up to me again?

P A P I L L O N

Why should I suffer so? We now are one:
I love Persillo, and he loves but me:
He's mine, and I am his so long as he
Pleasure and joy takes in my company.

A Day Dream in Japan

E V A R O U

But pity take on me. I cannot live
Without Persillo. Life is worse than death
When all one loves and lives for vanishes.

L I C H I

[*Coming out.*]

Yes, pity take, Papillon, on his wife,
And on me too: I love you more than life.

P A P I L L O N

Your love and life are worth about the same;
One word's their value: Nothing is its name.
So this is how she found her way to him!
The mystery's soon solved, though 'tis as well
I know that Persillo has other ties
Stronger than those perhaps which bind our
 love,
And he shall make his choice between us two.
Here comes Persillo! I will speak with him
While you two in this summer-house will hide.

[*Scene 2*]

A Day Dream in Japan

Feign making love, and then with jealousy
I'll tempt the truth from him in word or deed.

[Evarou and Li Chi go into summer-house. Enter Persillo.]

P E R S I L L O

Where have you been, Papillon, all this while?
Why do you look on me with such sad eyes?
A tear is glist'ning on your brow and seems
A wat'ry visitor from sorrow's cloud,
Keeping the brightness from the summer sky
Of your fair face. Tell me what makes you
mourn?

P A P I L L O N

A thought, a fear!

P E R S I L L O

Of what, mon Papillon?

P A P I L L O N

Your love, Persillo, if I have it all?

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

I love you, Papillon, as e'er I did,
As fervently as when we met at first
My soul, drawn by the magnet of your own,
Flew to your breast, and nestled like a bird,
Which, seeking shelter driven by the storm
Of unrest, found a kindred spirit there.
I love you more than e'er I loved before.

P A P I L L O N

Even than Evarou, your one-time wife?

P E R S I L L O

What makes you think of her? 'Tis different.

P A P I L L O N

Where is the diff'rence 'tween my love and
hers?

Am I not all in all to you, — and more?

Where is the difference between us, then?

[*Scene* 2]

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

You are my muse, — inspirer of my dreams.
Mistress of Nature, mother of my Art.
Nurturing my ambition like the sun
Which, shining on the bud, brings forth the
 flower,
So does your inspiration wean my will
From weakness unto strength, from thought
 to deed, —
You, Papillon, are to my love-lit soul,
As varied as the colors which adorn
The body of your namesake Butterfly.
She is my wife!

P A P I L L O N

Am I your mistress, then?
Till now I never knew you had a wife;
You didn't tell me, though I asked you not
But was content to pluck the passion-flower
Without a thought if it would bloom again.
But now that we have reached the root of
 this,

A Day Dream in Japan

And ere 'tis buried in the ground once more,
What future will the flow'r of fancy have?
Is she to fade from memory, and then
Reality regain her former place?

P E R S I L L O

Never will you fade from my memory,
Papillon. And my love will live with you
Till you grow tired of me, and then we'll part
Not in farewell eternal, but as friends, —
To go our ways, and ere long meet again.

P A P I L L O N

And Evarou? Will she agree to this
Arrangement, when she hears of it, think you?

P E R S I L L O

Who wots not of the old won't know the new.

P A P I L L O N

She knows!

[*Scene 2*]

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

She knows, you say? But how, and when?
You've told her, you, false traitress that you
are,
And have destroyed her world of happiness
In which she lived, loving and trusting me.
You had my love, why murder hers for me,
In killing hers you've murdered mine for you;
I hate you, yes! with a far deeper hate
Than e'er I loved before: I loathe you now!

P A P I L L O N

Thus fades love's flow'r choked by the weed of
hate,
E'en while the butterfly its petals press.
Poor Persillo! Your burst of passion tells
Only too well how brief would be our life
In Love's dream ere the rude awak'ning came.
I did not tell your wife, though she is here.

P E R S I L L O

Here? How and where? What mean you,
Papillon?

A Day Dream in Japan

P A P I L L O N

Look in the summer-house where oft you sat
Kissing and fondling me. What do you see
That makes you turn so pale and tremble
thus?

Surely, to make love is not very strange
For one so young and sweet as Evarou?

P E R S I L L O

My God! My wife! No, no! It cannot be,
Who lets that smiling scoundrel fondle her.
It is a spectre of my Evarou,
A shadow of the real, a ghost-like dream
I see. She speaks; Evarou, answer me.
She comes this way; she answers to my call.
Shadow or substance she is false to me,
And dies in dream or in reality;
Speak but one word, Evarou —

E V A R O U

Persillo!

[*Scene 2*]

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

Yes, I am Persillo, but who are you?
I know you not; I knew you once, but now
E'en your acquaintance is forgot; your love
I spurn with all the hate I have; your death
Is only too deserv'd — deceiver, die.

[*Stabs Evarou.*]

What have I done, Evarou, speak to me;
Your heart is bleeding, and your wounded eyes
Peer from your poor, pale face like two cold
stars,
Lighting a bloody deed the darkness fears
To face without the dying gleam of day,
Which penetrates the sable shroud of night.
What does this mean, Papillon? See, she steals
Away upon the arm of that old knave
With whom I saw Evarou just before.
It was some trick, some plan of Papillon,
Some web wherein she would entangle me.
Only one way remains — the path of death,
Whither I'll wander to find Evarou.

[*Stabbing himself.*]

A DAY DREAM IN JAPAN
SCENE III

A Day Dream in Japan

SCENE III

PERSILLO'S STUDIO — EVENING

Persillo's studio as at end of Scene I. Evarou and Persillo are lying asleep exactly in the same positions as at the termination of Scene I, which remains unchanged with the exception that the time is evening and the sun has set.

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

[*C. waking.*]

Ye gods! Am I awake then, and is death
Only a little sleep, a haunting dream
From which one wakes to live on in remorse,
Loveless and lonely, only half alive,
Existing on thro' all eternity;
Breathing and thinking, but devoid of power,
Asleep in action, but in thought awake?
Remorse! Oh! endless echo, sadd'ning sound,
Tolling the knell of happiness and hope:
The sunset of the soul, that blood-red hue
Of tragedy, though all unlike the sun,
Which only sinks to rest and rise again, —
While Evarou, my sun, my moon, my star,
Light of my life, for e'er extinguish'd
By one unmeant, unwilling, unkind blow!

[*Going up stage and looking round.*]

[*Scene 3*]

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A Day Dream in Japan

How ev'ry old association wakes
By the familiar sight of things I see! —
The fans I painted, but by her inspired,
Poems, which my hand penned, but her soul
 bore,
These flow'rs whose very perfume is her
 breath,
Whose pretty petals grew beneath her smile,
And, like the leaves, when she left, drooped
 and died! —
This chair where often we caressed, and lay,
One cushion bearing both our happy heads, —
This corner and this screen. — Oh! God of
 Heav'n!
Cannot repentance, self-reproach, remorse,
Bring back the spirit of my Evarou?

[Weeps.]
[Falling on his knees, Persillo
 knocks over the screen.—Evarou
 discovered asleep,—Moonlight
 shining full on her face.]

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

[*Surprised and startled.*]

What do I see, — or do I dream I see
Evarou's apparition? Surely she?
Reflection of the real, or phantasy,
But still the spirit of my Evarou!
How pitifully pale! How pure! How cold
Is death's mysterious shadow! Spirit, speak
Forgiveness in one undeservéd word!
Pardon my heinous, heartless crime! Alas!
Must I for ever mourn my Evarou?

E V A R O U

[*Waking.*]

Persillo!

P E R S I L L O

Evarou, spirit of her
I once called wife ere this calamity,
Which I repent and mourn so bitterly, —
Do not forsake me! Stay with me awhile!

[*Scene 3*]

A Day Dream in Japan

E V A R O U

Surely, Persillo, why should *I* leave you?
Women are weak except in Love, but then
Their weakness gives them strength, for Love
 is life,
And loss of Love a lonely, living death,
Devoured by memories till driven mad.

P E R S I L L O

But, Evarou, I only went astray,
Tempted by an enticing butterfly,
Which lured me on across a garden fair
Until it perched upon a passion-flower,
Which lost its perfume, and its color fled,
Like a false blush departing when the rouge
Is rubbed away by careless hand or lip, —
Only a wayward fancy which I mourn
More for my faithlessness than its deceit.

E V A R O U

Well! Your forgetfulness I will forgive,
But tell me, — came I hither in a faint

A Day Dream in Japan

Or slumber from that garden where we met
When, as I looked on you, my mem'ry fled?
Not e'en a random recollection's left,
Since seeing you I left Li Chi and came
Tow'rds you with open, outstretched, eager
 arms,
Full of desire, but failing ere we met,
For shadows seemed to seize my consciousness,
Taking me captive till, when here, I woke!

P E R S I L L O

Alas! I know not e'en how I returned;
Naught do I recollect since that sad time,
When o'er your body as I mourned I drew
My sword to kill myself.

E V A R O U

To kill yourself?

P E R S I L L O

Yes! Evarou, and in another world
To find forgiveness and the wand'ring soul

[Scene 3]

A Day Dream in Japan

Of her whose form fair e'en in death's dark
dream
I murdered.

E V A R O U

[*Shocked.*]

Persillo! You murdered! Whom?
Not Papillon, or Li Chi, who took me
To find and bring you back.

P E R S I L L O

Oh! Evarou!

Would it had been or Papillon or he
That old knave I saw in your company
Rather than you yourself —

E V A R O U

[*Surprised.*]

Rather than me!
What mean you, Persillo?

A Day Dream in Japan

P E R S I L L O

I mean, my love,
Would it had been myself or anyone
Rather than you I killed.

E V A R O U

[*Surprised.*]

Rather than me!
I do not understand! You killed me not!
You dream, Persillo, or we both have been
In sphere of shadows and a world of dreams.

P E R S I L L O

But are you not a spirit? Do you live?

E V A R O U

Why! What's the matter, poor, pale Persillo?

You tremble like a listless, autumn leaf,
Blown by the wind, which wavers to and fro,

[*Scene 3*]

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A Day Dream in Japan

Uncertain if to stay, or where to go! —
I have been sleeping, so I think have you,
And dreaming both. — Kiss me, you need not
fear;
It may persuade you I am Evarou,
No spirit, but your loving, living wife!

P E R S I L L O

[Kissing her.]

You are, indeed! No more I'll go astray!

E V A R O U

But if within Dreamland's confines you may!
The change of scene, I think, has done you
good!

P E R S I L L O

Yes! Love is living once again, and I
No longer feel that sad monotony,
Which robed me round in melancholy garb

A Day Dream in Japan

Ere pilgrimage I made with Papillon. —
See how the sun has climbed o'er yonder hill,
As now its duty done it goes to rest. —
But once again in dreamy melody,
Some story tell me, Eve, in tuneful song,
For maybe 'twas your music's memory,
Which haunted us along sleep's silv'ry stream,
Steering our separate barques with harmony
Down dreamy currents similar in source —
To part, and meet, and part — and meet
again!

E V A R O U

What shall I sing?

P E R S I L L O

Of what but of *a kiss!*

[Scene 3]

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A Day Dream in Japan

E V A R O U

[Singing.]

*The Butterfly's breath on the flow'r,
That answers his caress
With look of love and silent pow'r,
As he her petals press.*

*The song the bird chirps to her mate,
The bee hums to the flow'r,
The love-charm of a tête-à-tête,
The sunshine of life's hour.*

*The magic of the moonlit sky,
The story of each star,
Whisp'ring one loving lullaby
To earth forlorn and far.*

*For what is Love, or what is Life,
And what is Death but this?
A link 'tween earth and heaven above, —
The imprint of a kiss!*

[CURTAIN]



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